

AROUND THE HEARTH



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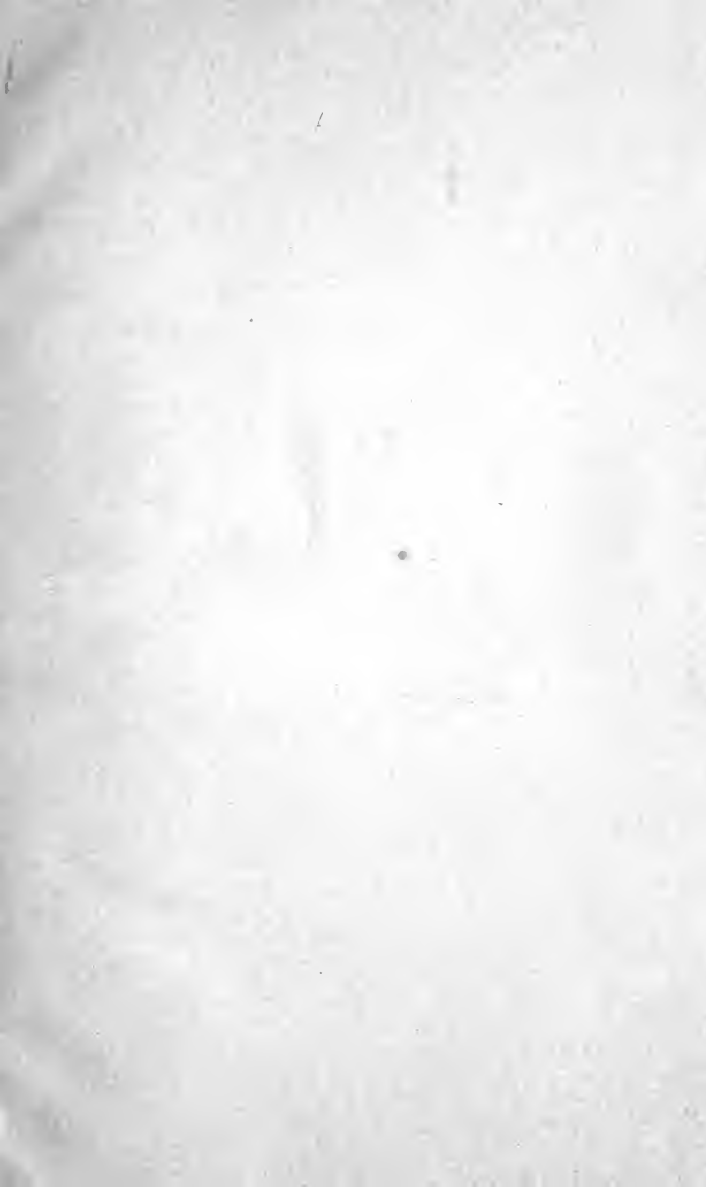
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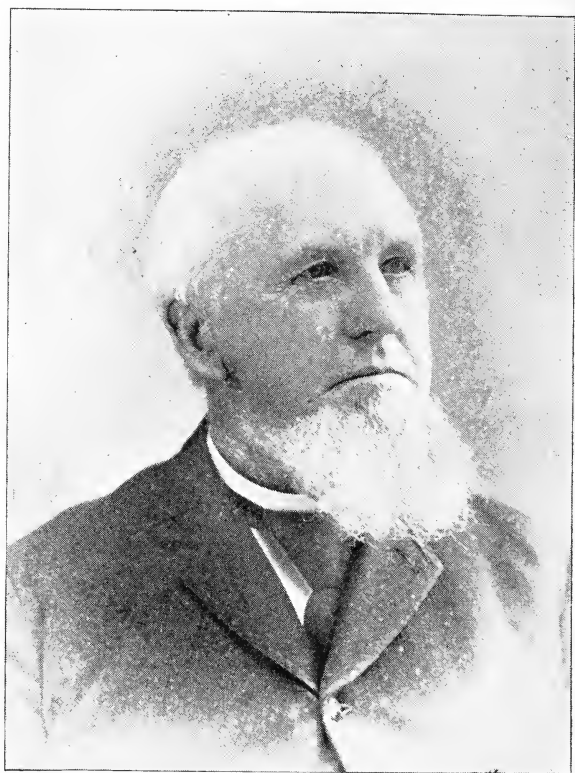
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M. S. Greene

AROUND THE HEARTH

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

MILLEN SANFORD GREENE



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BUFFALO

CHARLES WELLS MOULTON

1894

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AROUND THE HEARTH

PRELUDE.

IN THE VESTIBULE.

WITH trembling step I seek the sacred fane,
And 'neath its arches stand;
I list to voices ringing down the aisles
Melodious and grand.
Within its classic halls, on either hand,
The welcome smiles I see
Of bay-crowned victors in the lists of song
Their greeting give to me.

And so with reverence profound, I kneel,
And on its altar lay
This humble tribute. 'Tis my heart's best gift;
The sunshine of my day.
And if along the corridors there comes
One kind approving strain,
This modest offering at the muse's shrine,
Will not be made in vain.

AROUND THE HEARTH.

I N this wide world, there is no earthly place,
Whence flows such tranquil streams
Of sweet content; where Love's benignant face
Reflects such radiant beams;
Where Heaven's serenest smiles hold gentler sway,
So pregnant with good cheer;
Than on that sacred spot. God blest for aye,
The home, to all so dear.

I mind me, on one winter's frosty night,
Before the wood-fire's blaze,
That bathed the whitened walls with rosy light,
As bright as summer days,
And warmed each heart in every tender fold,
By its persuasive glow;
A genial group sat round the hearth and told
Their tales of long ago.

The ample fire-place, flanked with massive stones,
Is filled with blazing brands;
The straddling fire-dogs, like some ancient crones,
In watchful fashion stand!
The iron tongs against the chimney's side
Lean in a quiet guise;
The faithful house-dog warms his glossy hide
And winks his dreamy eyes.

The agéd grandsire, with his silvered hair,
And toil-worn wrinkled face,
Sits musingly within his old arm-chair,
In his accustomed place.
His bright eyes, twinkling with their wonted heat,
As one by one he calls
The youthful fancies from their dim retreat,
In mem'ry's shadowy halls.

Well stored with legends that his youthful prime
Had often heard rehearsed,
The morbid fancies of the olden time
The common herd had nursed;
The early trampings with his rod and gun,
The merry apple bees;
And husking frolics, come up one by one,
As treasured memories.

An ancient legendary tale to hear,
The eager listeners bend,
For illy can he brook a careless ear
That on his words attend.
So in his trembling, quaint and homely phrase,
With measured words and slow,
He tells a story of the Indian days,
That happened long ago.

DEATH OF COOKRUFFIN.

MISQUAMACUT, a goodly land,
By Narragansett's tribal band,
Had long been held in tenure strong,
Such as to Indian deeds belong.
No adverse claims of hostile chiefs
Had e'er maintained, however brief,
A foothold in its wide domains
Of fishing streams or woody plains;
But, like the winds that o'er them swept,
Their freedom in the chase had kept.
Though frail and scant their wigwams, yet
Small comforts all their wishes met;
And with a sense of sweet content,
And love of home so wisely blent,
These children of the forest dwelt,
And humbly at their altars knelt.

Its western bounds the Pawcatuck,
A placid stream, that seaward took,
'Mid fertile banks, its winding way,
Until it widened in the bay.
Its quiet bosom amply stored
With shad and alewives, to afford
Large bounties for the swarthy scores
Of dwellers on the woody shores.

Upon the river's western side.
The Pequots dwelt in homely pride;
Where undisturbed in sport or chase,
Through summers' heats and winters' wastes,
Their warriors, long in fierce array,
Had held their undisputed sway.

But now, like tribes on mischief bent,
Their neighbor's peace to circumvent,
They longed to roam the hunting grounds,
Beyond their own dominion's bounds;
And so, across the river's sands,
Upon the Narragansett's lands,
The Pequots cast their envious eyes,
Replete with hates and jealousies.
They saw their neighbor's peaceful ways;
Their wigwams bright as summer days;
And deemed such inoffensive state,
Too weakly and effeminate,
To wield the tomahawk and bow
Against a brave chivalric foe.

And so upon the river's banks,
They gathered all their warlike ranks;
From near and far the warriors came,
With ardent zeal and hearts aflame;
And thence, with menace, threat and raid,
A ford across the river made.

From Pawcatuck to Wequepaug,
Each foot of forest, hill and bog
The fierce invaders sought to own,
By virtue of a conquest won.
How like are modern white men's schemes,
To gratify ambition's dreams
Of power, glory and renown,
By trampling some weak neighbor down.

The Narragansetts ill could bear
With hostile tribes their lands to share;
Their homes, to them, were far too dear,
To show a craven sense of fear!
Too well they loved their loyal wives,
To tamely yield to scalping knives!
The children in their mother's arms,
Claimed mute protection from all harms!

And so their warrior spirit rose,
To bravely meet their savage foes.

The fearful conflict there begun,
Had raged from morn to setting sun:
The open glades and forest dells
Resounded with the savage yells!
The cumbrous bow was laid aside,
And hand to hand the issue tried.
Brave warriors prone upon the field,
While life remained, disdained to yield,
Till deftly with the scalping knife,
The bloody trophies sealed the life.

So hard the Narragansetts pressed
Their stubborn foes, that, sore distressed,
The Pequots, fiercely obstinate,
With envy fired and deadly hate,
Contested, in their forced retreat,
Each foot of ground. But in the heat
Of conflict dire, they vainly tried
To stem the swift victorious tide,
That with the Narragansetts rose,
To overwhelm their savage foes.
The vengeance which each chief had vowed,
To wreak upon the invading crowd,
Was poured upon the hostile band,
E'en to the borders of their land.
The ford, at length, the Pequots crossed,
With all their hopes of conquest lost.

But one brave chief, who foremost pressed
The fleeing foe with vengeful zest,
Too far the stream had ventured o'er,
And stepped upon its hostile shore.
There 'mong his foes, in sullen mood,
The daring brave a captive stood:
And lest he 'scape their savage hands,
Bound his strong limbs with withy bands.

Before their Council great they brought
The captive chief. No one knew aught
That would condemn a warrior true,
Who coward stain or fear ne'er knew,
Save only, he, a hated foe
Had laid their bravest warriors low.
So with a hot revengeful breath,
They doomed the captive chief to death.
Unmoved the valient warrior heard,
From venom'd lips, the fatal word:
But like true son of royal blood,
Erect in noble manhood stood;
Nor signified by word or sign,
A sense of fear. They may refine
The cruel art of torture; tear
Limb from limb, and e'en prepare
The burning fagots round his feet,
To make his torments more complete,
But can not wring a single tear,
That tells of weakness or of fear.

A giant oak stood near the ford,
And spread its arms above the sword:
Its massive trunk a fitting stake,
Where valor, unsubdued could make
Of sturdy hearts, a sacrifice
And vengeance claim the bloody price.
To this, they bound the royal chief,
While overhead, each trembling leaf,
As conscious of the shameful death,
In painful silence held its breath.
The very air grew strangely calm
As if inspired with dread alarm.
Surrounded by his painted foes,
All armed with their death-arrow'd bows,
They hurl upon his doom'd head
Their taunts and jeers of malice bred.

Unmoved, he bared his manly breast;
Unbowed he held his noble crest;
Nor sense of pain, or tinge of fear,
Could move a nerve or force a tear.

When surfeit had of wordy spite,
And scornful gestures tired the sight,
Each warrior then his strong bow drew,
And from each arm the arrow flew.
The chieftain in his bosom felt
The sting, the deadly weapons dealt.

Amid his foes' exultant cries,
While tears bedewed the mourning skies,
The spirit of the warrior passed,
And with his fathers dwelt at last,
Thus like a patriot true and tried
The fearless, brave Cookruffin died.

The grandsire's long drawn tale of savage strife,
Rehearsed with such minute details, as old
Men love, the first remembrances of life,
To tell to listeners in the younger fold,
Was ended, and around the circle's edge,
A gentle tremor ran, like rippling flow
Of brooklets, creeping 'neath the reedy sedge,
To where the cowslips and the lilies grow.
So well had he portrayed the bloody scene,
So vividly each act of savage spleen,
It seemed the baser tones of earth's deep wail
Were sounded in the depths of that old tale,
When blinded passion ruled the common life;
A foe to peace; a friend to warring strife.

With cap of snowy white and beaming eye,
And face, tho' wrinkled with the length of years,

Yet lighted with the brightness of a life,
On which all worldly cares had lightly laid
Their heavy load, and who; even now, retained
The freshness, in a large degree, of youth,
The Grandam sat, just where the ruddy glow
Illumed her countenance, and radiant made
The quiet smile that played around her lips,
And gave fresh lustre to her sparkling eyes.
To turn the current of the sober thoughts,
Wrought by the grandsire's legendary tale,
To more congenial and happier moods,
With sidelong glance to where the grandsire sat
As if some youthful fancies she recalled,
Which mem'ry long had cherished, she began
A story of her early maidenhood.

THE RED EAR OF CORN.

IT seems so many years ago,
When in my sun-bright morning,
Life's joys, with constant overflow
Of youthful spirits, all aglow,
Foretold Hope's radiant dawning.

Among the bright autumnal days,
That graced one mild September,
When harvest fields seemed all ablaze,
With bearded wheat and spindled maize,
Ah! well do I remember.

The ample stretch of ripened field,
That cheered our thrifty neighbor;
A prophecy of fullsome yield,
Unto his sanguine heart revealed
The fruitage of his labor.

I stood beside our neighbor's son!
We husked the corn together!
He, tall and manly, full of fun,
I such a gay and timid one,
Yet buoyant as a feather.

I'm sure I never shall forget
My heart's intenser feeling.
And burning cheeks, as thus we met,
As fading twilight lingered yet,
The blushes half concealing.

For when the first red ear he found,
And knew its mystic meaning;
That favors are with blessings crowned,
When duty prompts, or love abounds,
With no distrustful leaning;

He, not for coyish maiden stayed,
Or bashful prudence thinking,
But claimed the tender forfeit made,
And gallantly the tribute paid,
With no unmanly thinking!

Full fifty years have passed away,
With no regretful feelings,
And every harvest seems to-day,
Illumined with a brighter ray
For love's diviner dealings.

For all along life's pathway lie
The reddened ears of duty,
And we, my neighbor's son and I
Have paid the forfeits faithfully,
In love's transcendant beauty.

"Well said," the agèd grandsire made reply,
As on his staff he leaned, and swayed his head,
In pleasant recognition of the tale,
So well rehearsed in grandam's homely phrase.
"I know," said he, "the pleasure I enjoyed,
When that sweet forfeit of my youth was paid.
Although long years hath intervened, and life
Hath been o'erwearisome and dull at times,
Yet that sweet pledge as lovingly remains,
And sweeter grows as days and years go by."
The very wood-fire seemed to recognize
The genial smiles that overspread each face;
For suddenly, the brightness of its blaze,
The faces in the circle lighted up,
Like blushes on Aurora's radiant brow,
When dawn announces her divine approach.
Our father laid aside his chosen book,
And with becoming reverence listened to
His mother's quaint and tender narrative.
A hasty glance to where my mother sat;
A meaning smile upon his lips the while,
As if some sudden reminiscences
Came thronging up, of youthful scenes and times,
From out the dim, wierd shadows of the past,
And which, perchance, were treasured pictures,
hung
Within the sacred halls of memory.

He, with a simple nod to listening ears
Began his tribute to the evening task.

WHEN I WENT FISHING.

WITHIN a forest's cool retreat,
Beneath an oak's outspreading arms,
A shelter from oppressive heat,
And troubled fancy's rude alarms!

Beside a winding river's sweep;
Its silent current dark and wide;
Where down, within its murky deep,
The phantoms of the forest glide;

'Twas such a place, to me made dear,
Comes freshly to my quickened soul,
As memory with a record clear,
Reveals the writing on its scroll.

Familiar were those woody shades;
The winding paths—the cozy nook—
Where I, beneath the alder blades
Oft plied the rod and baited hook.

Still fresh in these my later years,
The trembling line I can descry,
When nibbling trout with wary fears,
Just came and touched the tempting fly.

What sweet delicious wine o'errun
The cup Dame Fortune held for me;
What mystic threads the Fates had spun,
To bind my heart, I did not see!

For suddenly a lovely maid
 Appeared before my startled gaze,
Where, in the cool and friendly shade,
 She'd strolled along the beaten ways!

Old friends, we thus together met
 Upon the river's mossy bank;
I'm sure, I never shall forget
 The nectar, there my spirit drank!

She was my friend in childhood's years;
 We played together on the green;
And on the same school roll appears
 Our names, in letters fair and clean.

Upon the bank we found a seat,
 And conversed there of many things:
My rod and line lay at my feet,
 And time flew by on golden wings,

Till twilight shadows, like a pall,
 Began to shroud the leafy wood,
And far above the tree-tops tall,
 The guardians of the evening stood.

Reluctantly we left the spot,
 But first a parting token gave;
For in that hour was born, I wot,
 The richest boon my heart could crave!

In pleasure's quest, with rod and line,
 I'd sought the river's shaded side,
Nor dreamed a treasure so divine,
 For me, lurked near its flowing tide!

The all-enduring test of time,
Affection's strongest links have tried,
But ever, as in youthful prime,
I've loved and blest that river's side.

A pleasant smile passed o'er the mother's face,
With just a modest blush, that told a train
Of happy mem'ries that had swept apace
Across the intervening years, and lain,
As precious jewels in her heart's embrace,
That now with more than wonted lustre shone,
Imparting beauty and a lovely grace
To every comely feature, all her own.
In vain th' emotion of her heart she tried,
With all the discipline of mature years,
From sidelong glances of her friends to hide.
The real acknowledgement of love appears,
More visible within a woman's breast,
When modest blushes make it manifest.
Her mended stockings then she laid aside,
And through her friendly glasses, glanced around
Upon the smiling group. A conscious pride
Suppressed the rising thought, that almost found
Expression in a gently mild rebuke.
Upon an upper kitchen shelf, there lay
An old dust-covered box, as if forsook,
And touched with mouldy symptoms of decay.
In it were worn out screws and rusty nails,
Old broken files and bits of leather strings,
Some unmatched hinges, ears of unused pails,
And other refuse of discarded things,
That length of years had gathered one by one,
And kept, because of some good service done.
This box she drew from its long resting place,

And carefully the mongrel contents scanned,
As if for some hid treasure; while her face,
With rapturous expectation, or the fire-glow,
fanned
To crimson blushes; and from thence drew out
The very hook, which on that August day,
In vain attempts to capture trout,
As listlessly upon the bank he lay!
Exultingly she cried, "To you I bring,
What made the joy at that familiar haunt,
And which, altho' a mean and senseless thing,
Hath ever been to me significant
Of that mysterious power, which cast aside
My youthful fancies for a life untried."

A genial fervor of approval passed
Around that pleased and happy group, and found
Expression in the hearty laugh, that cast
Its sunny rays of cheer on all around.
"This hook," she said, "shall henceforth be to me,
One golden link that binds me to the past;
More firmly holding the sweet memory,
When Love at my young feet its jewels cast.
It is enough to know, that on that day,
The wily fish were cautious of the fly,
And kept so well aloof and far away,
The he, who held the rod, and tried to ply
This baited hook, absorbed in love no doubt,
Ne'er from the river drew a single trout."

Another merry ripple ran around
The charmed circle, and amid applause
That followed with a hearty joyful sound,
The father's face (and for right good cause)

Was flushed with such a tell-tale crimson tint,
That proved its own acknowledgement
Of how the tale had given but a hint
Of what the mother's explanation meant.
The mirthfulness subsided, when all eyes,
With confident expectancy, were turned.
Towards her radiant face, where no disguise
Could hide the flame that in her bosom burned
Thus mutely importuned, in simple rhyme,
Rehearsed a legend of the olden time.

THE SPECTRAL MAIDEN.

A LEGEND OF ROSE CREEK MINNESOTA.

A LEGEND of the olden time
Invests that quiet stream,
With all the magic of romance,
The shadings of a dream.
It was when on its virgin breast,
No white man e'er had gazed,
Nor yet upon its mossy banks
His log-house fire had blazed.

The only lordlings of the land,
The beasts, that roamed untamed;
The finny tenants of the stream
Lived undisturbed, unclaimed,
Save when some hungry water bird,
While watching for his prey,
The unsuspecting victim seized
As if in wanton play.

Upon its banks, in course of time,
A band of red men came;
Those rovers of the wilderness,
In warm pursuit of game.
They found, beside the river's sweep,
A soft and mossy bed,
Whereon to stretch their swarthy limbs,
With spreading boughs o'erhead.

One morning, ere the flush of dawn,
Changed into rosy bloom,
And pearly dew-drops of the night
Hung glittering on the broom,
A vision, beautiful, appeared
Before the stranger's eyes,
That filled their simple untaught minds,
With wonder and surprise.

For on the river's further shore,
Beneath the branching wood,
Like one just out of Paradise,
A radiant maiden stood!
A halo of celestial light
Shone round about her head;
Her countenance serenely bright,
A Heavenly lustre shed!

A flowing robe of purest white,
Her comely figure graced!
A gem of rarest brilliancy
Flashed on her snowy breast!
And on the beauteous maiden's feet
The golden sandals shone,
So like a queen in regal state
Upon her royal throne!

A moment more the red men gazed
Upon the vision fair!
Their very souls, enraptured, dazed!
'Twas strange beyond compare!
They looked again; lo! stranger still!
For in the rising dawn,
A light flashed o'er the distant hill,
And her bright form was gone!

Each rosy morn, with eager eyes,
They looked across the stream;
But never in the opening dawn,
Saw but the sun's bright beam,
As o'er the eastern hills it came,
And rested on the ground,
Where once the radiant maiden stood
With matchless beauty crowned.

But stranger yet! upon the spot
Her fairy feet had trod,
Beneath the overhanging boughs,
With golden sandals shod,
A bed of pure white roses sprang,
As by some magic hand,
And breathed delicious fragrance round
That virgin forest land!

"Enough," the father said, "for unto *one*,
The vision of that olden time, with modest grace,
Revealed her loveliness, where mortal eyes
Could gaze enraptured on her radiant face!
For she, it was, who, to the woodland came,
And sat beside me by the river's side;
And who, since then, hath made my home
A paradise, where angels might abide!"

This unexpected turn, the genial group
With added joyousness and fresh delight,
Approval manifested and affirmed
The father's explanation to be right.
With modest blushes on the mother's cheeks,
She met their sunny smiles with pleasing grace,
That heightened her becoming loveliness,
And gave fresh lustre to her charming face.

Among that pleasant company, was one
Who years ago, in childhood's early day,
Played with our grandsires on the new mown hay,
And, who like him, watched his descending sun;
A welcome visitor among the farms,
Who loved to sit and talk of olden times;
Of tours in other lands, in other climes;
Of ventures on the seas, of storms and calms.
To him with one accord all eyes were turned,
With such imploring glances to recall
Some reminiscences that he had learned
Which none so well as he, could tell withal.
"I'll spin a yarn," said he, with gentle swing,
"How once I visited an island lone,
And bowed before an uncrowned king,
As he reclined upon his log-built throne."

THE UNCROWNED KING.

IT was in eighteen-fifty-two,
We sailed along the equator's line,
Upon the broad Pacific's blue,
With gentle breezes, soft and fine.

With all her whitened canvas spread,
The goodly ship her way pursued,
And o'er the trackless waters sped,
As if with conscious life endued.

The lookout at the topmast head,
His glass around the circle swept,
Where calmly in their misty bed,
The sea and sky together slept.

Outlined upon the filmy verge,
A lonely island dimly lay,
And on its outer reefs, the surge,
A slender fringe of whitened spray.

With courses down and topsail free,
We sailed toward the distant land,
Perchance our dull monotony
To break upon its wave-washed strand.

We neared the reef, as seeméd good,
And swung the topsail yards aback;
There sleepily, the old ship stood,
And nodded in her watery track.

Upon our weather bow the land;
Beneath the trees we could descry
The low huts of the dwellers stand,
With groups of people gathered by.

Two well-manned boats rowed from our side,
On through the gentle heaving surf;
With swarthy natives for our guide,
We landed on their friendly turf.

Upon a rising slope of ground
With giant trees on either hand,
The palace of the king we found,
Where dwelt the ruler of the land.

Some rough-hewn logs, a platform made;
A leafy canopy o'erhead;
Some mats of woven palm o'erlaid,
Was all the dusky monarch's bed.

Reclining on his dexter arm,
There, like a lion stern and grim
He lay, a large and stalwart form,
With massive strength in every limb.

Beside him, sat his faithful slave,
And with a fan of feathered palm,
Brushed off the wanton flies, that gave
Disquiet to his rigid calm.

The gentle hint we did not need,
That lack of courtesy might see,
The tyrant on our bodies feed,
To appease offended majesty.

So to his royal palace, grand,
To pay our homage humbly went;
And there, discreetly, hats in hand,
Before him reverently bent.

His cringing subjects gathered round,
But none dare in his presence stand,
Or walk erect, or near be found
Against his majesty's command.

The monarch, without nod or smile,
His eagle eyes upon us set,
As if to warn against, meanwhile,
A breach of savage etiquette.

No king upon a gilded throne,
With treasures vast at his command,
Whose sceptre could an empire own,
And rule with an imperious hand,

That naked monarch could exceed,
In royal dignity and ease;
More like the king of beasts indeed,
Reclining 'neath his native trees.

Enough had Eden's primal needs,
Ere yet the fig leaf lent its charms;
So his one garment, only beads,
Around his strong and brawny arms.

And here, methought a type might be,
Of human life when earth was young;
When passions ruled uncurbed and free,
With fierce desires the tribes among.

Like this the germ, from whence hath grown,
Along the lapse of countless years,
The mighty dynasties whose thrones,
Have been baptized in blood and tears.

We strolled about the groves at will,
And gathered, by some barter fair,
Mementos of their untaught skill,
For trinkets that we well could spare.

At length we bade our friends adieu,
And waved to them our dumb farewell;
We, our lone voyage to pursue;
They, in their solitude to dwell.

The eager circle listened with delight
And interest intense unto the tale,
The visitor vouchsafed, with kind avail,
In smooth but stately measure to recite.
A flood of simple questionings began,
As all desirous were the truth to know,
Of how the people looked, and how the man
Whom he had called the king, could truly show
Such dignity and bearing on his throne?
And by what subtle power he ruled alone?
What sign of royalty did he possess?
Did his commanding presence, with such awe
Inspire his subjects, that his will was law?
What kind of beads were those, his only dress?
The men and women of his small domain,
What was their color? what their scant attire?
What kind of shelter from the wind and rain?
And what the food that made their daily fare?
All this and more of what he saw and knew,
In simple narrative the pictures drew.

At once some speculations were begun,
As how and whence these people first became
Possessed of this lone isle, and from what name
Or nation were they sprung beneath the sun.
The grandsire thought that such, perhaps, might be
The social plane from which our own hath sprung,
When tribal bands, with low desires and free,
Roamed o'er the earth, its hills and vales among:

Who knew no law save such as nature gave
When brutal force held every man a slave.
Our maiden aunt some legends of the past
Had studied, found in tomes of ancient lore,
Around the circle furtive glances cast,
As if her portion of that goodly store
She would contribute from old mythic days;
She thus began in legendary phrase,
The sad experience of one who sought
For present wealth, and how 'twas dearly bought.

THE LUCK FLOWER.

A GERMAN MYTH.

UPON the sloping sides of Ibsenstein,
A mount that reared its rounded crest
In ancient Germany, there lived, 'twas said,
A humble shepherd, who, in virtue's ways,
Watched o'er his flocks, as faithful shepherds do,
Apart from all the busy haunts of men,
And so removed from their seductive wiles.

One day, while driving up his little flock
Towards the mountain's summit, weary grown,
He leaned, to rest awhile, upon his staff;
When lo! the mountain opened suddenly.
For in his shepherd's crook there lay concealed,
The beautiful blue flower, whose magic power,
So runs the myth, could penetrate and cleave
Asunder flinty rocks.

There he beheld,
Upon a golden couch, in regal robes,
The lovely princess Islè. At her feet,

And all around, vast heaps of shining gold,
Exceeding far his most illusive dreams.
Her gracious smiles and gentle, winning ways,
Beguiled his virtuous soul. While listening to
Her fascinating words, he quite forgot
The humble and contented life which he
Before had lived, while leading forth his flocks.
A potent spell, like some enchanting dream,
Absorbed his thoughts, and him a captive led.

Obedient to her fair command, he stooped
And filled his pockets with the precious coins.
Which done, he turned to seek the light of day:
When with her winsome voice, the princess said:
"Do not forget the best!" meaning his staff.
Which he had thoughtless leaned against the wall.
Mistaking her delusive words, he stopped
To gather yet more of the tempting gold.

Now all the latent force of selfish greed,
That hitherto had slumbered in his breast,
Awoke within him new and strange delights.
Already visions of a paradise
Of earthly splendors filled his wakened thoughts.
When he, surrounded by the promised wealth
His fancy painted, would be his t'enjoy.
No longer on the mountain's sloping sides,
Or in the grassy vales to guard his flocks;
But stately mansions, in whose gilded halls,
His feet would tread the measures of a prince.

Alas! for all his visionary dreams!
For with a thund'ring crash the mountain closed,
And he was severed bodily in twain!
Thus perished he who, in the winding toils
Of evil, laid aside his virtue's staff,
And with it, lost, for sake of worldly lust,
The best fruitions of a humble life!

MORAL.

They, who, for greed of sordid wealth
Forsake fair Wisdom's ways,
And listen to the siren's call,
Her honeyed words of praise,
May ne'er in conscious rectitude,
Attain the meed of promised good;
For Wisdom cast in virtue's mould,
Is greater wealth than mines of gold.

This ancient legend with its moral brought
From old traditions of primeval lore,
Recalled the time, when common truths were taught
By symbols gleaned from Nature's ample store;
Where in its secret chambers were concealed
The common virtues of the human mind;
Their useful lessons only were revealed
To man, by intuitions, unrefined,
Known only by the few, and least of all
By devotees, who at some mystic shrine,
With supplications vain and frantic calls
Upon some deity they deemed divine.
A brief discussion of the lessons taught
In these old faiths around the circle went,
And all agreed that what of knowledge sought
By darkened minds, was with sincere intent.

Among that deeply interested band,
Was one, whose lips, in all that evening hour,
Had been as closely sealed, as if a power,
Much like the touch of zero's frigid hand,

Was laid upon them; silence so profound,
That not a token of approval came,
Or outward sign, or uttered word or sound,
That would the very least attention claim.
But when was done, the tales of other lands
The quiet "Uncle Kit" waved both his hands,
As if commanding silence, then began
A rhyme about a discontented man.

UNREQUITTED LOVE.

ALL is not gold that glitters:
Or balm that perfume yields;
The zephyr's breath is lade with death
That blows o'er desert fields;
So life is often but the seeming guise
Of brightest flowers that bloom beneath the skies!

When in life's early manhood,
The future years seem bright;
The youthful mood for promised good,
That pleasures then invite,
Is purified when love's supreme control,
Makes holy all the longings of the soul.

The love that charms and blesses,
Is nought, if not divine,
And blest is he, whose soul is free
To worship at its shrine,
Like Calla Lilies' sweet perfume, it gives
Its fragrant benedictions while it lives!

Alas! for love's fruition!

Its round of dear delights!

As beckoning hands of desert sands

The far mirage invites:

So oft we find the love we would possess,

Is distant still, and hopes grow daily less.

There seldom is a friendship

So promising and fair,

Like the summer rose, that lives and grows,

With tender loving care,

But through some secret weakness or disguise,

Is seen the shadow that behind it lies!

The love that's unrequited;

The sharpest sting of all,

To the whole of life, its calm and strife

Brings bitterness and gall!

When thorns instead of roses strew the way,

And piece the weary feet, that thither stray.

The round of earthly pleasures

Are pregnant with distress!

The precious years are moist with tears

Of conscious wretchedness.

The flame that warmed our youthful heart's desires

Still lives, but smoulders in love's unquenched fires!

Thus youthful hopes are thwarted,

And vain the fond pursuit

For happiness, the years to bless,

With love's divinest fruit:

A few long lonesome days, and that is all!

A heart unloved must drink life's bitter gall.

The air of discontent that marked this song
Was such, that in the mild applause,
A feeling that some real or fancied wrong
Had been to him the seeming cause
Of the despondent, friendless spirit shown
In every measured line and rhyme;
Some fondly loved and cherished hopes had flown
Across his manhood's early prime.

Again into his solitary mood
And strangely still reserve he sank;
Of all the goodly group, least understood;
Life's pleasures seemed to him a blank.
The hopeless tenor of the theme had wrought
A moment of subdued suspense,
With divers moods of sober, silent thought,
From his accustomed reticence.

Then as the waning embers of the fire
With fainter heat were burning low,
Outspoke the staid and quiet old grandsire,
Who wished his grandson, Tom, to know,
(Such telling emphasis he gave to it,
That Tom could not the meaning miss):
"When I was young," he said, "I would not sit
Beside a fire so mean as this."

A merry ripple of approving smiles
Illumed each cheerful listener's face,
With that rich glow, which mirth alone beguiles,
And gives to life a pleasing grace.
The pointed hint, Tom quickly understood,
And on the fire the fuel laid;
Then by the lambent flames of blazing wood,
His tribute to the evening paid.

A SLEIGHING ADVENTURE.

'T WAS once on a time, on a mild winter's day,
Jo Williams and I took a ride in a sleigh;
The snow had just fallen, 'twas the first that we
had,
So a chance for adventure just made our hearts
glad.

So off for the city a full score of miles,
Through the half broken drifts in the narrow defiles,
Over hills almost bared by the strong sweeping
blast,
We two careless youngsters drove merry and fast.

Arrived at the city without a mishap,
We wandered about without caring a snap
Whether time went by swiftly or moderate in pace,
So long as we saw all the sights in the place.

We both were as verdant, as verdant could be!
No unripened fruit could be greener than we!
To visit a city we had both been denied,
So we yearned for the wonders our thoughts
magnified.

We gazed in the stores and we stared at the girls,
Admired their red cheeks and their beautiful curls;
We longed for the sweetmeats that tempted our
eyes,
But sighed for our purses' diminutive size.

We looked at the buildings so massive and tall,
And wondered what uses were found for them all:
Adorning their fronts were large letters of gold,
So lustrous, they dazzled our eyes to behold.

And all to our innocent fancy that came,
I'm sure it is useless to try now to name,
Such numberless things that to us were all new,
O'erwhelmed us with wonder the whole day through.

The shortening length of the sun's lessening height,
Recalled the few hours between us and night,
That homeward we must be ere long on our way,
For prudence forbade us to longer delay.

Reluctantly bidding the city farewell,
Having laid up a store of its wonders to tell:
Our good horse and cutter, with homeward turned
 head,
Along the smooth snow-path we lightsomely sped.

Soon before us we saw, plodding on thro' the snow,
An object that touched the compassion of Jo;
A lady, well dressed, but for aught that we knew,
Might be black as Erebus, and uglier too.

But Jo, not caring but to play a good joke,
Beneath the thin guise of a merciful cloak,
Said to me, "If you'll ask yonder lady to ride,
I'll walk the short distance, where she may reside."

I took up his challenge and drove on alone,
Disappointed most happily, I may as well own,
For blooming red cheeks, and a sweet modest face,
Accepted my offer with dignified grace.

Well tucked in the sleigh 'neath the buffalo's folds,
So snugly and warm, we could laugh at the cold,
We drove on and chatted in innocent glee,
As happy as clams 'neath high tides of the sea.

I supposed that her home must be some house in
sight,
Each moment expecting she would ask to alight:
But what my surprise and sudden dismay,
When told she resided some four miles away!

I thought of the wrath of unfortunate Jo,
If compelled now to travel four miles in the snow:
And what he had thought would on me be a joke,
Now found himself bearing the short end of the
yoke.

But there was no remedy Joseph could find,
So he nursed his resentment and trudged on behind:
While the lady's bright, modest demeanor and
grace,
Gave speed to the moments that flew on apace.

The warmth of her grateful acknowledgements
made,
Told how timely the favor, how welcome the aid:
But her musical voice as it said the "good-bye,"
Betrayed some emotion, I never knew why.

Since then, that sweet face I never have met,
And even her name is a mystery yet;
Of one thing I'm certain, Jo never forgot
The joke that he played, and how dearly 'twas
bought.

The gentle ripple that had hitherto
Passed round the circle, when some pleasing tale
Was told, a torrent now became, which drew
Forth loud applause and cheers that did not fail
To provoke merriment, even in the staid
And quiet habit of the agéd sire,
Who, with keen relish, listened, as he swayed
Upon his cane before the cheerful fire.
And yet, beneath it all, a secret touch
Of sympathy for poor unlucky Jo
Was manifest, that he had suffered much
In his long toilsome tramping through the snow.

But now there came a genuine surprise
To all who sat around that kitchen fire!
Like those prophetic visions that apprise
Of such delights as human souls desire.
A visitor, whose welcome presence lent,
Where'er she chanced to be, a certain grace
Of brilliant, sparkling cheer and merriment,
Within the circle found a favored place.
The village doctor's estimable wife,
And neighbor, heard the story Tom portrayed.
Her beaming eyes seemed with emotion rife,
And tell-tale blushes, secret thoughts betrayed.
For very joy she rose and raised her hands,
Exclaiming, in a sudden burst of glee,
"That very maiden now before you stands,
"Who thus did ride her home and friends to see!
"Those tedious miles I oft before had trod:
"But now, the snow, the journey made severe;
"And though a stranger asked with kindly nod,
"I risked the venture with becoming cheer.

"I well recall how welcome was that ride;
"And how I wondered why we went so slow;
"And how my escort, seemed a little tried
"At something, which of course, I could not
know.
"Had I but known that his companion, Jo,
"Was plodding after with a rueful face,
"I surely would have traveled in the snow,
"And not usurped another's rightful place."

This unexpected turn in that bright round
Of sunny merriment, filled with surprise,
Each listener's ear, none more than Tom's who
found
How hard it was to credit his own eyes:
When right before him stood the rosy lass,
Who rode with him that strange adventure
through:
If doubting thoughts through any mind did pass,
Her declaration proved his story true.
But when subsided had the merriment,
And quietude prevailed again,
The doctor's worthy wife her tribute lent,
And told the sequel in her brightest vain.

MY SATURDAY AFTERNOON WALKS.

FOR many months I traveled
Along that very road,
Home from my weekly labors
Weary to my abode,

To spend the quiet Sabbath
Beneath my father's roof,
And from the world's turmoil
To keep myself aloof.

Sometimes a kindly neighbor;
Sometimes a stranger friend
Would volunteer to take me
Unto my journey's end.
But oftener tired and hungry
I walked the way alone;
Nor thought it very dreary
(Tho' sometimes late, I own).

One afternoon was stormy;
I started for my home;
The wind and rain were fearful;
The road was muddy loam;
I saw, drive up beside me,
Within a covered wain,
A youth, who kindly offered
To shield me from the rain.

With more than grateful feelings,
I took the proffered ride;
I quite forgot the tempest,
While seated by his side,
For I before had known him,
When in my school-girl days,
And learned then to respect him,
And like his pleasant ways.

Full many a time and often,
On stormy days and clear,
When my week's work was ended,
He came with kindly cheer,

And more than friendship's greetings,
That warm in mem'ry lie;
When wingèd hours of pleasnre
Flitted unheeded by.

To-day his pleasant greetings
Are full of joy to me;
And years of true devotion
Are visions fair to see.
We've walked life's road together,
In sunshine and in shade,
And never in its windings
In devious paths have strayed.

With him on mercy's errands;
With him in pleasure's quest;
With him, when clouds of sorrow
Obscured our noonday rest;
With him beyond the river,
When earthly walks are o'er,
I hope to tread the pavements
Upon the farther shore.

The story ended, when a cheerful round
Of generous applause
Attested to the genuine delight;
And in the moments pause,
Which followed her completed narrative,
Tom's face was all aglow,
And with his quiet native modesty
Exclaimed, "If that be so,

“I am rejoiced to know, at this late day,
The truth she now declares,
The pleasure once was mine, to entertain
An angel unawares!”
This pleasant sally broadened every smile,
And each with earnest zest,
Congratulated Tom’s well-timed response,
Of all their sayings, best.

Just then, the tall old-fashioned clock’s wierd voice
The hour of ten proclaimed;
The quiet hour, in which to seek repose
The grandsire always named.
Then in his gentle reverential way,
He bade “Good-night” to all,
And asked that holy benedictions might
Descend on great and small.

Thus ended one of life’s serenest days,
Remembered with its best;
Like wayside fountains bubbling sweet and clear,
Where weary marchers rest,
Reluctantly the parting hands were clasped,
As each farewell was said;
Ere long, the gentle goddess of repose,
Breathed o’er each sleeper’s bed.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



IN BEHRING STRAITS.

BOTH CONTINENTS IN SIGHT.

A DREAMY haze, such as is only seen
In Arctic's noon of summer's mildest days
Pervades the atmosphere, and on the cold
Ice-tempered waters of this narrow strait
Rests, like a benediction from above.

On either hand, huge promontories stand;
The bastioned outposts of great continents;
And boldly raise their stately heads in air;
Majestic in their towering strength, and grim
In all the aspects of their outward forms;
Their heads snow-crowned; their feet rock-bound
and torn;

Their ragged sides all desolation marked;
Their bases fringed with lines of whitened foam
Of the impatient waves, as heavily
They dash against the adamantine walls
With wild relentless fury, while the spray
Is hurled upon their dusky sides, like sheets
Of silvery mist.

Far up the rugged cliffs,
And wheeling round in graceful circles, fly
The screaming sea-birds, whose shrill notes
mingle

With the sea's sepulchral voice. To and fro,
Food-laden, they convey to gaping mouths
Of their impatient young, reposing in
Their airy nests on some projecting crag,
The precious morsels gleaned from sea and shore.

The native monsters of the Arctic seas,
The seal and walrus, and the larger still
Leviathan, here sport and roam at will,
When summer's sun unlocks this icy gate.

Across this highway to the open sea,
An arch of phosphorescent light is stretched,
With either foot upon the snow-white heads
Of yonder massive buttresses; a bridge
Of pure enchantment, which together binds
Two hemispheres with bright auroral fires,
The pyrotechnics of the frozen zone.
Like warriors grim, in mailed armor clad,
These barren, storm-worn cliffs stand boldly forth,
And hurl their proud defiance, each to each,
With voices like the thunder's distant growl;
While Diomedes,* faithful sentinel,
Midway between the frowning giants, stands
And watches them with an untiring eye.

The mighty nations of these continents,
In course of time, have struggled, reeled and fell,
And on their ruins others rose to life;
The world, awhile, would tremble with their power;
Again to shake it with their dying throes.

But years have witnessed these firm battlements
Receive unmoved the ponderous iceberg's shocks,
Hurled with relentless fury, by the force
Of Arctic tempests, 'gainst their rocky base;
Nor length of time, nor utmost stretch of power,
Save by the Almighty's hand, their aspects hoar,
Can change, or shake them from their stable bed;
And not until, with fervant heat, the earth
Shall melt, and like a fragile parchment scroll,
Be broken and dissolved and pass away,
Will these grim outworks of the continents

* A small rocky island between the two capes.

Be moved from their deep and firm foundations;
But lifting high their proud majestic forms,
Proclaim the fiat of Omnipotence:
"Thus far shalt thou advance. Here must thou
 stay,
And in thy firm, reliant attitude,
Forever hold the continents apart."
1851.

THE VOICE OF THE SEA.

WHAT news art bringing from over the sea,
Thou foam-capped billows of brine?
What messages art thou whispering to me,
As thy white lips beckon to mine?

I lay mine ear to thy wave-washed sand,
And list to the weird undertone,
That comes with the surge from the far-off strand,
Like the sobs of a distant moan.

It comes like soft music into my soul,
In cadences plaintive and low;
It seems like the dirge which the ages unroll,
As I list to thy rhythmical flow.

Is it sweet sounds from the coral isles,
Where the sea-god's temples are?
The chanting of priests in the deep defiles,
That lead to their place of prayer?

Is it the moan of a dying gale,
Whose breath is well nigh spent,
Bearing its load with a sorrowing wail
From the islands of discontent?

Is it thy lullaby song to repose
When the sunset portal unbars,
As thy wave-rocked cradle, when the daylight
goes,
Lulls in thy bosom the stars?

Is it the suppliant pleadings and cries
Of languishing sea-nymphs that weep,
While breathing their love to the tremulous skies,
Way down in thy fathomless deep ?

Not these! my spirit bows with reverent fear,
When the oncoming billows I greet;
For the voice of thy great Creator I hear,
As they foam and dash at my feet.

SEA-SIDE MEDITATIONS.

I N thoughtful mood, along the sands
Of ocean's whitened fringe I strolled,
And listened to the music grand
Its waves had sung since days of old.
Beside the mighty minstrelsy
My very soul with awe was stirred;
For strains like these from human lips
The numbered ages never heard.

I gathered pebbles on the shore,
And shells of every form and shade,
And pondered o'er the matchless skill
That in these trifles was displayed;
But there I thought beneath the tides,
Where mortal eye could never beam,
The wealth of ocean's wonders far
Exceeds the fancy's brightest dream.

I stood beside the massive piers,
And saw the waves around them play,
And wondered why such seeming strength
Was needed for their quiet stay.
But when I've seen old ocean rise
And hurl its waves resistless on,
And marked the wrecks of human skill
Along their thundering pathway strewn,

I thought how man was all too weak
And poor to utter word or breath,
Or lift a hand to stay a power,
Whose very pastimes end in death;

Or vie with the consummate skill
That fashioned all its countless forms;
Or touch the grand majestic chord
That's heard amid its angry storms.

As my short vision only saw
The simpler lessons Ocean gives,
I could not know the subtle power
That in its inner chamber lives.
Too great for human souls to grasp,
Too high for human thoughts to reach,
Too grand in all its mighty works,
To find a place in human speech.

PASSING SHADOWS.

WHEN filmy clouds float leisurely along
Athwart the Summer's noonday sun,
Like spectral sheets of white and fleecy down,
Borne slowly onward one by one;

And mark their progress on the laughing earth,
In fitful shadows o'er the land,
The stately trees and modest blooming flowers
Their welcome speak with waving hands.

For grateful seems the cooling zephyr's breath,
When, from the scorching sun's bright rays,
A moment's respite these brief shadows give,
Like resting places in long days.

So when brief clouds obscure our noonday sun,
And on our lives their shadows cast,
The rest seems sweeter with the conscious thought,
All will be brighter when they're passed.

Altho' adversity may sorely press,
Its shadows make our pathway dim,
'Tis blest to know the same bright morning sun
Illumes the cloudlet's outer rim.

THE SUNKEN CHIMES.

It is said that sailors in the Carribbean Seas fancy they hear
chimes of bells of a submerged island.

WHAT mellow tones are these I hear
From depths of green and blue?
What music strikes upon my ear
So sweetly and so seeming near,
That thrills my being through?

As distant chimes they come to me
Now vanished, now renewed,
Like waifs upon the throbbing sea,
That rise and fall so passively,
In restful quietude.

Is it some rover of the deep
O'erwhelmed by tempests' blast,
Lies stranded on some lonely steep
Beneath the waves, that surging, keep
Her lone bell swinging fast?

Perchance within the coral glades,
Where rose and amber twine,
The sea-god hath his altar made,
And calls his realm, as daylight fades,
To worship at his shrine.

Mayhap within some chambered shell,
The sea-nymph tolls its lay,
So very like some chiming bell,
Swung by the ocean's ceaseless swell,
That steals my sense away.

The sweet vibrations come and go,
So true and real they seem,
As ocean tides that ebb and flow;
Yet in my conscious heart I know,
It must be all a dream.

BURIAL AT SEA.

'TWAS sunrise, and the ocean waves
 Slept calmly on its heaving breast;
 The gentle zephyr's weary wings
 Were folded, like a dove at rest.

Enshrouded for an ocean grave,
 Upon the deck a shipmate lay;
 The living spark had ceased to burn;
 The spirit's home was far away.

Each swaying mast and sail and spar,
 A sign of conscious sorrow wore,
 And in soft tones their requiem sang,
 As if the seraphs hovered o'er.

How did our hearts with anguish throb,
 As round his lifeless form we stood,
 And took our last and farewell look,
 While flowing tears our cheeks bedewed!

The flag, beneath whose stripes he'd sailed,
 And known its true protecting care,
 Now honored, in its fond embrace,
 The lifeless form reposing there.

Our captain, from his Holy Book,
 Read of a new and better life,
 And bade us each, in faith to look
 Beyond a world of ceaseless strife.

We launched him o'er the vessel's side,
The sea received him as its own;
The conscious waves closed o'er his head,
As down from sight he sank alone!

He sleeps in Ocean's cold embrace,
Whose waves, in life, he loved so well,
With naught to mark his resting place,
Nor voice, save its incessant swell.

THE WIND GOD.

A NORSELAND MYTH.

THE Wind God hath, so the Norsemen say,
His home in the far Northwest;
And he ruleth his realm in a royal way,
By a nod of his royal crest.
His winged coursers, in trappings of light,
More fleet than meteors are;
While fleecy chariots of gossamer white,
Attend when his courts unbar.

Whenever he waveth his magical staff,
To signal his elfin band,
The air resounds with the wanton laugh
Of sprites from the fairy-land!
Forth from their homes in the cavernous glens,
And the gorges bewildered and deep;
Out from the marshes and luminous fens,
The hosts of his retinue sweep.

Some rein in their hands the airy steeds,
That rush in their fury along;
Some tune their soft harps for the moment of need,
And croon their invisible song,
The trees of the forest, the grass of the plain,
The reeds in their watery bed,
Are swayed by the touch of the on-sweeping train,
While the god rides in state overhead!

They near a low hut, where in anguish and pain,
On the verge of mortality's sea,
A spirit, like a bird imprisoned, would fain
Escape from its toils and be free!
Soft music floats in on its languishing ebb,
Like a wind-harp mournful and low;
Enchantment is weaving its magical web,
And the life current ceases to flow.

The spirit released, hath taken its flight
Through the casement opening wide;
It fled on a sunbeam's pathway of light,
To the fairy throng outside.
The god swooping down from his airy height,
Clasped it to his royal breast,
And bore it away, in his chariot white,
Away to his chambers of rest.

MY MOTHER'S SONG.

“ I KNOW that my Redeemer lives,
 What comfort this sweet sentence gives,”
 My mother often sung,
 In soothing numbers soft and mild,
 To me, when I, a fretful child
 Unto her bosom clung.

I could not know the sense of pain,
 That, mingled with the sweet refrain,
 Her gentle spirit wrung.
 I could not know the weight of care,
 With which she breathed for me the prayer,
 That trembled on her tongue.

That love-wrought cadence to my ears,
 Comes floating down the stream of years,
 In tones that seem divine!
 My soul is lulled to calm repose,
 As when of yore, at daylight's close,
 She laid her face to mine.

And now beyond the mystic veil
 Angelic voices never fail
 That song of love to swell;
 The heavenly chorus greets her ears,
 In praise of Him, who thro' long years,
 She loved and served so well.

FORGOTTEN, THOU WILT
NEVER BE.

WHAT wealth of meaning in these words!
What loving mem'ries round them cling!
How tenderly their music falls,
Upon the heart's responsive strings!
When life is lonely, cheerless, dark,
And friendships seem away to flee,
'Tis heaven that whispers in our ears,
"Forgotten, thou wilt never be."

When sundered in the world afar,
The music of the voice unheard,—
When hands forbidden each to grasp,
And lips to utter sign or word.
How sweet to know one faithful soul,
Of all we chance to know or see,
Still cherishes the tender thought,
"Forgotten, thou wilt never be."

When life, within the breast is faint,
And faith looks up with doubting eyes;
When peace doth plume its wings for flight,
Away from earth's imploring cries.
How priceless is that trusting friend,
Whose very soul is love's own plea!
From whom the blest assurance comes,
"Forgotten, thou wilt never be."

PARTED FRIENDS.

AS hope, with its alluring dreams,
Incites the soul with strong desires;
So friends, long parted dearer deem
The joys which trustful love inspires.

As cherished treasures often prove
The tend'rest objects we may know;
So friendship's steadfast flame of love,
In distant hearts may brighter glow.

As flowers that in seclusion hide,
Oft breathe a sweeter fragrance there;
So, dearest friends, tho' sundered wide,
More sacred keep the love they bear.

SPIRIT AT REST.

IN MEMORIAM.

MY DAUGHTER DIED SEPTEMBER 29, 1877—AGED
20 YEARS.

“**S**PIRIT at Rest,”
Rest from life's weary cares,
Rest from the ills it bears,
Rest from the gloom it wears,
Forever rest!

“Spirit at Rest,”
Rest from all pains and woes,
Rest from all sorrow throes,
Rest from all unreprieve,
Forever rest!

“Spirit at Rest,”
Rest from all griefs and tears,
Rest from all doubts and fears,
Rest from thy darkened years,
Forever rest!

“Spirit at Rest,”
Rest as a nestling dove,
Rest in the arms of love,
Rest in thy home above,
Forever rest!

A SUMMER GREETING.

I LOVE the clear blue summer skies,
That look down so benignly;
The earth returns with grateful eyes,
The greeting most divinely.

I love the coming of the dawn;
It tells of joy and gladness;
It laughs the cares of earth to scorn,
And dissipates its sadness.

I love to see the shafts of light,
Across the hill-tops gleaming;
They blaze upon the mountain's height,
Like beacon watch-fires seeming.

I love to see the jeweled stars,
That sparkle on the meadows,
Like diamonds, when Aurora's car
Pursues night's fleeing shadows.

I love the grand old forest trees,
Costumed in princely splendor,
And 'mong their branches hear the breeze,
Such gentle music render.

I love to hear the whispering leaves,
Their loves to each confiding,
While warp and woof of sunbeams weave
The veil their blushes hiding.

I love to sit beneath their shade,
The friendly zephyrs moving,
As they come trooping through the glades,
The flying hours pursuing.

I love to hear the feathered throng,
Pour out their glad hearts o'er us;
All earth rejoices in the song,
While heaven takes up the chorus.

I love the gently rippling rills,
That wander 'mong the grasses,
Or leaping gaily down the hills,
Through steep and narrow passes.

I love the grand majestic sweep
That marks the river's motion,
Whose bosom bears the whitened fleet,
Towards the friendly ocean.

These pages from great Nature's book
Set all my pulses beating;
For in its author's face I look,
And feel love's kindly greeting.

AT MY DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE.

MAY 18, 1885.

WHEN spring in its freshness, o'er the land
 brightly gleams,
Fond love's light awakens the soul's secret dreams,
And in the deep yearnings which nature provides,
The birds, by their sweet intuitions decide.
So now, my dear children, in life's blooming spring,
The sweet buds of promise and beauty doth fling
Their fragrance divine o'er your lives, like a veil
Of enchantment, and around you exhale
The blest consecration of faith and of love;
May the union, so holy, be recorded above!
'Tis not the mere words that unite kindred hearts;
That faith is but shadow, that no love imparts;
Affection is not a mere child of the earth;
A meaningless thing—ignoble in birth;
But near the white throne, in flames supernal,
That glow in the heart of the great Eternal,
Are finished the chains that on earth are begun,
Whose mystical touches make two into one.

May happiness ever beam constant and clear,
That now in such rays of sweet vision appear;
Remember, earth's pillows are not always roses,
Upon which the head confiding reposes;—
That all is not gold that gives lustre and brightness;
That seemingly substance is often but lightness.
To all that is pure and noble and true,
Your lives' best efforts are unreservedly due;
Tho' sometimes, and this is but our common lot,
The way may seem dim and life seem a blot;

Dark clouds of adversity sometimes arise,
That only are blessings dressed up in disguise;
Remember no cloud but its darkness doth hide,
The brightness that shines on its silvery side.
My blessing goes with you wherever you are;
My love be your portion, I can give you no more;
My home may seem lonely, but this be my prayer;
May God bless you always in basket and store,
And give to you ever, contentment and peace,
And his blessed presence, till life's duties cease.

A DREAM.

A GENIAL warmth pervades my room;
 Outside, the cold winds blow;
 Alone, beside the open grate,
 I watch the embers glow.
 The dear loved faces on the wall
 Preserve their wonted smile;
 Their asking lips and speaking eyes,
 My lonely heart beguile.

Absorbed in deepest reverie,
 That soothes my waking sense;
 Beyond the shadowy land of dreams
 My spirit wanders hence.
 A swelling chorus greets my ear,
 Of grandest harmony,
 Whose measured numbers rise and fall,
 As murmurs from the sea.

Old Homer from the classic shores
 Pours forth heroic strains;
 And Virgil sings, in pleasant tones,
 His pastoral refrains.
 John Dryden's quaint and homely rhyme,
 And Milton's sacred fire,
 While Avon's bard with matchless skill
 Attunes his deathless lyre.

The noble strains of Byron's verse;
 The minor tones of Grey;
 The lofty flight of Shelley's lark,
 And Scott's rich minstrelsy;

Montgomery, with reverent tread,
And Moore's soft flowing tune,
And Scotland's shepherd sweetly sings
Of love and Bonnie Doon!

The treble voice of Browning blends
With Hemens' gentler song,
And multitudes of voices swell
The chorus loud and long,
Across the borders of that land
Their mighty numbers sweep;
They steal upon my ravished dream,
And charm me while I sleep.

Eternity of years will ring
With harmonies untold!
And added hosts will hither bring
Their harps and lyres of gold,
But here, we barely step within
The vestibule of song;
We ne'er shall know the perfect chords,
Until we join that throng.

FREEDOM'S TRIUMPH.

READ ON MEMORIAL DAY, 1887.

LONG years ago, when thrones and civil creeds
 Of empires vast and old
 Were synonyms of selfishness and greed,
 Of hates and crimes untold,
 There burst upon the unwakened world
 A single gleam of light,
 Whose brightness glimmered like a beacon fire,
 Upon a starless night.

Astonished nations from afar, beheld
 The portent in the sky;
 And to their wondering vision, it proclaimed
 A fearful struggle nigh.
 Men saw the kindled flames of Freedom rise,
 Fanned by the hand of God,
 Which lighted up the pathway to the skies
 That patriot feet had trod.

O'er lowly vales and sun-kissed mountain peaks,
 A thrilling echo sped;
 It smote upon the slumbering fears of men,
 Like voices from the dead.
 With eager, listening ear, and anxious eye,
 And half unconscious breath,
 They heard ring out th' immortal patriot-cry,
 "Give me Liberty or Death!"

They heard the joyous clang of ringing bells
 Peal forth in rhythmic time,
And "Liberty throughout the goodly land,"
 Proclaimed the stirring chime!
The living tongues that spoke these thrilling words,
 Have long to rest been set,
But their divinely mortal utterings
 Thank God! are ringing yet!

That ancient flame lit up our troubled sky,
 Again in later years,
When war's dread scourge filled many loyal hearts
 With anxious doubts and fears.
A stricken nation saw the wondrous sight,
 And stood with bated breath;
The mystic current ceased its wonted flow,
 And hearts grew still as death.

A shout arose that clove the vaulted sky,
 And pierced the firmament;
A ringing shout of glad, exultant joy,
 From hearts redeemed was sent.
Four-million happy voices raised on high
 Their song of jubilee,
And Freedom's glory clothed the stricken land
 With light from sea to sea.

The chains that had so long the bondmen held
 Through all the laggard years,
And had the fettered millions scourged,
 Unmoved by Pity's tears,
At once were severed, as by lightning stroke,
 And he whose limbs they galled,
Walked proudly forth, complete in manhood's prime,
 Erect and disenthralled!

All honor to that noble hearted chief,
 Whose pen the fetters broke!
 All honor to that loyal patriot host,
 Whose swords sustained the stroke!
 The proudest monument that man can place
 On martyred Lincoln's grave,
 Is shackles, which his magic word and touch
 Hath stricken from the slave.

The rifted clouds revealed a crimson morn,
 Beneath a stormy sky,
 And Freedom lifted over all the land
 Her bow of promise high.
 To-day the Nation lives in Freedom's strength,
 With Freedom's blessings crowned;
 With consciousness of an eternal right,
 We tread on Freedom's ground!

To-day the Nation wears her sable robes,
 And tears fall unsuppressed
 Upon the grassy, consecrated mounds
 Where Freedom's martyrs rest,
 Their graves are here; we deck them with bright
 flowers,
 We reverently kneel,
 And touch the garment God hath bid them wear,
 Whose hem the nations heal.

They are not dead; and they can never die!
 Upon the Nation's heart,
 Engraved with pen of steel, their deeds will stand
 To teach a grander part
 Than victories on sanguinary fields;
 Momentous duties, higher,
 Greater, and nobler for the Nation's weal,
 Their matchless deeds inspire.

Eternal truths inscribed on hist'ry's page
Perpetuate their fame;
Their blood upon their country's altar poured
Feeds freedom's deathless flame.
To save a state, when torn by traitor hands,
Is work that shall endure;
Be ours the task to supplement that work,
And keep the Nation pure.

O my country! Be thine a nobler care
Than all thy garnered stores,
Thy teeming harvests, or thy mines of gold,
Or commerce of thy shores!
Be it thy pride forever to uplift
The manhood of the poor,
And be to all the lowly and oppressed,
Fair freedom's open door!

O my country! I love thine honored name!
Grand mem'ries round thee twine!
The guiding star that led thy conquering hosts,
Now shines with light divine.
Forever wear on thine imperial brow,
Blest freedom's diadem,
With righteousness the forehead jewel bright,
And peace the crowning gem!

ARE ALL THE CHILDREN IN?

AN agéd mother's useful life
 Was drawing near its close;
 Upon her dying bed she lay,
 As in a calm repose.
 As memories came thronging back,
 Her mother heart within,
 She whispered with her parting breath,
 "Are all the children in?"

Ah yes! dear soul; long years before,
 When shadows round thee fell,
 When life to thee held treasures dear,
 Thou heard the solemn knell
 That tolled for loved ones gone before
 A blessed peace to win,
 Her yearning heart recalled once more,
 "Are all the children in?"

She sees the Master waiting stand
 Beside the gates ajar;
 She hears the melodies of heaven
 Come ringing from afar.
 She heeds the angel's beckoning hand,
 And questions once again,
 Tell me, ye guardians at the gate,
 "Are all the children in?"

A PERFECT DAY.

SERENEST of these Autumn days!
Like breath of tropic isles,
So pure and holy is its calm,
That all the atmosphere is balm,
And all the landscape, smiles.

The gentle zephyr's transports come,
With perfume laden sails,
And Heaven's benedictions bear
To field and woods, that once more wear
The Summer's queenly veils.

With eyes uplifted unto one
Serene, unclouded sky,
Where faith and sense together meet,
The Father's gracious smiles we greet,
And feel His presence nigh.

So may our life's autumnal days
Grow brighter at the last;
And give to toiling spirits cheer,
As summer memories reappear
Sweet visions of the past.

Like wayside inns where tired souls
Can find a brief retreat,
So these mild, peaceful days are sent,
As trysting places with content,
And rest for weary feet.

A CHEERFUL OLD AGE.

"For him in vain the envious seasons roll,
Who hath eternal summer in his soul."

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

SERENLY bright is that well-rounded life,
That all the years before
Hath kept the beauty of its early flowers
Still blooming at fourscore;
The cheerful heart no adverse tempest heeds,
Nor snows along the way;
Nor murky clouds across the tranquil sky
Can make a joyless day.

Thus ever with the trusting heart, whose hand,
Like Jordan's spirit dove,
Rests down upon the Master's head to feel
The sunshine of His love;
The summer gardens yield their sweetest flowers
To blossom at his feet;
The perfumed zephyrs, as from heavenly bowers,
His happy footsteps greet.

So, while the cheerful spirit feels the calm,
Sweet fervor of His grace,
And looks with humble, trusting confidence
Into the Master's face,
Adversity is powerless to cloud
The brightness of his sky,
Or quench the fragrance of the wayside flowers
That greet his passing by.

THE REWARD OF WELL DOING.

FIDELI CERTA MERCES. (LAT.)

I N every busy walk of life,
If golden peace prevails or strife,
Whate'er the lot,
'Tis he, who cheerfully doth bear
The conflicts and the shocks, his share,
And flinches not,
Who wins the world's sincere applause,
That's ne'er forgot!

We love to grasp his manly hand,
Who danger meets, and leads the van
In every race!
Nor falters when life is at stake,
Nor shrinks to fight for virtue's sake;
To e'er embrace
The cause that stands for right and truth
In every place.

Fame's highest niche in temples old,
The noblest names and greatest, hold,
The world e'er knew!
And by whose record all may read
The worth of each unselfish deed,
To virtue true!
And know the blest reward of those
Who right pursue.

HIDDEN TEACHINGS.

AN open book before me lies,
 Whose subtle teachings I would prize,
 Could I but know
 The hidden depths from whence they rise,
 The channels where they flow.

I see a page of spotless mein,
 O'erlaid with drifts of crystal sheen,
 So pure and white,
 That Peace seems brooding o'er the scene,
 And silence reigns in light.

I see a page with verdure dressed;
 Buds bursting forth at Spring's behest,
 And gentle showers,
 That lave the landscape's thirsty breast,
 To haste the vernal flowers.

I see a page all blossom crowned,
 With roses scattered o'er the ground,
 Profusely fair!
 And summer garlands wreathed around,
 Like robes of queenly wear.

I see a page of somber hue!
 It thrills my soul with wonders new;
 So passing strange
 The scene, the artist's pencil drew,
 I marvel at the change.

I said, "Thou volume of the year,
I fain would solve the secret here,
 Thy spirit weaves;"
"Then read," it whispered in my ear,
 "While Autumn turns the leaves."

I would the soft command obey;
The open book before me lay;
 But as I read
These mystic symbols of decay,
 The leaves were sere and dead!

JUNE.

HAIL, lovely Queen ! In regal state
 Thou sittest on thy throne,
 In all thy matchless beauty robed,
 In majesty thine own !
 Among the ever moving train
 Thou hast the foremost place,
 And loveliest been since blushing earth,
 First saw its maker's face.

I hear thy whispers in the trees,
 So faint and yet so clear;
 I catch the freshness of the breeze,
 And know that thou art here;
 The unseen fragrance of thy flowers
 Is wafted to my sense,
 And, standing with uncovered head
 I own the recompense.

Serenely o'er thy queenly brow
 I see thine incense rise,
 And shower its benedictions down
 From thy o'er-burdened skies.
 Thus every nerve of mind and sense
 To beauty is attune
 While summer bows her princely head
 To kiss the robe of June.

THE BRETON MARINER'S PRAYER.

THE smiling skies looked kindly down
Upon the tranquil sea;
The blue above, the blue below,
In love-like harmony.
All boundless seemed the unruffled deep;
Beyond, no land in sight!
In majesty the great sea lay
Reposing in its might.

The Breton, wrapped in rev'rant thought,
Stood his good barque beside;
The sails were set, the cable loosed,
And favoring the tide.
To heaven he raised his trembling eyes,
And meekly, humbly cried,
"Keep me, O God, my boat is small,
Thine ocean is so wide."

Go, trusting heart nor fear the storm,
To do thy vessel harm,
The God, whose frown is in the gale
Smiles also in the calm.
So though His ocean is so wide,
And thy frail barque so small,
'Tis safe to trust the guiding hand
That overruleth all.

CHAUTAUQUAN ODE.

ASSEMBLED at this eventide,
 Our grateful spirits rise,
 All richly freighted with a load
 Of pleasant memories.
 The helpful words of love and cheer;
 The goodly lessons read;
 The friendly graspings of the hand;
 The kindly greetings said.

Together, a united band,
 Along the paths we've strolled,
 Where rarest flowers in beauty grew,
 In fields both new and old
 At every step, we've culled the gems,
 From each historic page;
 And living truths have gathered from,
 The poet and the sage.

Responsive unto every need,
 Our watchful eyes hath seen,
 And fruitul hath, for greater good,
 Our earnest labors been.
 For these, this night, Thou Power divine,
 Accept our hymn of praise,
 And help us to be wholly Thine,
 The remnant of our days.

TO SAINT VALENTINE.

MY dear old Saint, I thee implore
To kindly pass my errors o'er,
And grant that in thy loving heart,
Forgiveness thou to me impart.
One only boon from thee I crave,
The best that e'er immortals gave;
That I may at thy holy shrine,
Choose Mary for my Valentine!
And may her kind, confiding heart,
Transfixed by love's unerring dart,
Receive the message so divine,
That I'll be hers and she'll be mine,
And live to bless Saint Valentine.

THE DUTY OF TO-DAY.

"When a friend asks, there is no to-morrow"—

GEO. HERBERT, 1640.

IF ever on life's journey,
 In sunshine or in shade,
 The troubled heart is yearning
 For sympathy and aid;
 Stern duty's call admits of no delay,
 For bleeding wounds are better healed to-day.

 If all the blest fruitions
 That grow on friendship's vine,
 Were only intuitions
 That round the future twine;
 There could be no sweet balm to sooth and cure
 The aching pains that souls to-day endure.

 No time is like the present:
 And friends are dearest, best,
 Who pour the wine of healing
 At mercy's mild behest:
 There can be no to-morrow for the needs
 Of him, whose heart to-day with anguish bleeds.

 Then, always to be ready
 To answer sorrow's cries,
 Is the sublimest duty
 That friendship's hand supplies.
 The new-blown rose is sweeter, plucked to-day!
 To-morrow's sun may take its life away.

THE REUNION.

"Companionship in toil and sorrow
Makes every man a brother."

—EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

FEW ties so strong in life's brief round
As those which hardships form,
Where dangers, strifes, and cares abound,
In sunshine or in storm.
Whether upon the restless sea,
Exiled from home and friends,
Amid the drear monotony
The sailor's life attends;

Or out in unexplored fields,
In golden treasure's quest,
The miner's toil its harvest yields
Of perils and unrest;
The lonely life, the homely fare,
Privations hard and keen,
The draughts of stern endurance are
Drank from the same canteen.

And so upon the battle plain,
In camp or in the fray,
The soldier feels the friendly chain;
Grow stronger day by day,
The bonds of true companionship
The shoulder touch hath made;
The countersign on every lip,
The soldier's accolade.

And so 'tis meet that those who shared
 Discomforts in the camp,
 The perils of the battle dared,
 The long and weary tramp,
 Should come and grasp again the hand,
 And with each other strive
 To light once more the council brand,
 And keep its fires alive.

To tell the stories of the strife
 In peaceful bivouac,
 And share the goodly things of life,
 With brimful haversack;
 To hear again the bugle blast,
 And into column fall,
 And march once more, before the last
 And final trump shall call.

A remnant only now remains
 Of all the true and tried,
 Who bowed before their country's fanes,
 Then marched on side by side.
 Each year the roll-call will grow less,
 Shorter the homeward route,
 And fewer feet its pathway press,
 Till all are mustered out.

"GOOD-BYE, PAPA."

"As the last person was leaving the open grave at the burial of the late James C. Archie, in River Bend Cemetery, his little child, looking down, exclaimed, 'GOOD-BYE, PAPA.'"

—*Narragansett Weekly.*

DEAR child, beyond the dark, mysterious veil,
Thy loving father heard
That simple token of thy filial love;
And angel hands, in living light above,
Will write that parting word.

Think not, because his form you can not see,
Nor feel his fond embrace,
Nor listen to his tender words of cheer,
And watch affection's loving wreaths appear
Upon his smiling face,

That he is far away from home and thee,
And all he held most dear,
For in thy lifelong journey, day by day,
In sorrow's fitful hour, or childish play,
His spirit hovers near.

It holds communion with thee in thy dreams,
Which makes thy heart rejoice;
In every aspiration of thy youth,
In all thy yearnings after love and truth,
Is heard thy father's voice.

And when the sunset of thy day shall come,
With its bright gates ajar,
Then thou shalt see his waiting spirit stand,
And greeting give thee, with a welcome hand,
Beside the evening star.

BETHLEHEM'S STAR.

THE star that rose o'er Bethlehem's fertile plains,
Where shepherds watched by night—
The sudden burst of grand, majestic strains
From Heaven's empyreal height
Proclaimed the tidings of good will to men,
And peace to all on earth;
And ushered in the glorious morning, when
Incarnate Love had birth.

No royal palace, with its lofty walls,
Not downy bed of rest,
Not kings nor princes, in their gilded halls,
Received the heavenly Guest;
But to the lowly manger's mean retreat,
Was Heaven's high accord;
For angels came and worshiped at the feet
Of Him, their infant Lord.

More lustrous now appears that holy light;
That song hath sweeter sound;
And burdened hearts enwrapped in Sorrow's night,
The promised Peace have found;
To-day the guiding star of sacred Love
Beams on our devious ways,
And from the bright seraphic choirs above
Are heard the psalms of praise.

YGGDRASIL.

A SCANDINAVIAN MYTH.

O VER the well of Time
Stands this wonderful tree:
It branches the worlds o'erspread!
Above the heavens it rears its head;
As if in vengeful glee
The fretful winds blow free,
And blasts its buds and leaves with wintry rime.

Above its topmost boughs,
A mighty eagle soars,
A symbol of o'erruling power,
Whose keen eyes watch each vagrant Hour;
And mark where Discord pours
Its blighting breath; with stores
Of heavenly wisdom, gods and men endow.

Into the depths below,
From whence its life ascends,
To regions where immortals sway
Their sceptre over Night and Day,
Its triple roots descend.
There sparkling fountains lend
Their humid tides, that through its branches flow.

From Ymir's self it grows,
He the Frost giant, great!

He, from whose body slain, the Earth,
Blue Heavens, and murky clouds hath birth!
Near Odin's hall of state,
By Asgard's palace gate,
Among the gods, he sleeps in grim repose

Near to this Well of Time,
Stands Wisdom's sacred shrine,
Where fairest Norns, in queenly state,
Dispense the mystic runes of fate.
On beaming altars shine
The mysteries divine,
That Odin's priests intone in Skaldic rhyme.

THE COMING STORM.

I STAND in the gloom of the gathering storm
And watch the clouds go by;
I hear in the trees the coming breeze,
Like a troubled spirit's sigh.
I follow the birds in their timorous flight,
And list their querulous notes,—
Their accents of fear, on the tempest near,
In broken melody floats.

The silvery sweep of the river below,
Is ruffled with conscious dread,
Far down in its deeps the storm shadow creeps,
And frowns in its dusky bed.
Beyond, like shadowy phantoms in air,
The circling hills I trace,
For the coming gale hath thrown its veil
Of mist o'er their comely face.

There comes to my sense on the rarified air,
A steady and rhythmic moan:
It sounds like the dirge that's sung by the surge,
When wrecks on the shore are thrown.
It comes like the spell of a wizard's charm,
And my beating heart is stayed,
For its moanings foretell, in that ominous spell,
The force of the storm delayed.

Awe-stricken I stand and with breath subdued
Await the coming blast,
The gathering clouds, with thunderings loud,
Are flying low and fast.
Be still, O fearing heart, be still!
And cease thy strange unrest!
For He, who guides the winds and tides
Knows what for thee is best.

TO THE OLD YEAR.

GOOD-BYE, Old Year! Give us thy hand!
We've been good friends these many days!
Thro' storm and sunshine, cold and heat,
We've kept the tenor of our ways.

We mind us, when thou wast a child
We saw thy smiling golden dawn!
How cheery was the welcome then,
We gave thee on that happy morn!

With open arms and spirits light,
We met thy brightly beaming face;
We placed our hands confidingly
Within thine own, with tender grace.

We've walked together hand in hand,
And close companions ever been;
We've trod the down incline of life,
Where visions of the end begin.

Old friend, we now bid thee adieu!
Thy work is well and nobly done!
And thou hast loved and kept us too,
From devious paths by thorns o'errun.

If sorrow hath beside us strode,
Like evil purpose, us to guide,
Its every touch, howe'er it burned,
Thy love hath more than sanctified.

Alas the unknown multitude
Who greeted thy bright morning rays,
But lived not in thy kindly care,
To see the fullness of thy days!

Farewell! Thou hast a tender place
Within our hearts, a precious store
Of pleasant mem'ries there enshrined!
Farewell, old friend, forevermore!

LIFE'S TOILERS.

L IKE ships upon the ocean wide,
The brief years come and go;
Now, bearing seaward on its tide
The buoyant hopes that flow
From hearts just launched upon the deep,
With pleasant skies and bright!
And gentle gales of love, to keep,
And trust, to guide aright.

Now bearing homeward ample stores,
Reward of toilsome years;
The gathered fruitage of a voyage,
Whose end almost appears
Outlined upon the western sky,
As shadows longer grow,—
And headlands of the harbor rise,
Beyond the sunset's glow.

And so the toilers on life's sea,
Forever go and come;
The outward bound, with spirits free,
Greet those returning home.
Unceasing toil awaits the first,
In golden fortune's quest;
Returning, seek the haven bright,
Where weary toilers rest.

THE RIFT IN THE CLOUD.

A RADIANCE most holy,
 Upon my spirit falls:
 A beam of sun-bright glory,
 Breaks thro' the cloudy pall,
 That long hath cast its shadow
 Upon my life's bright day;
 I welcome in its beauty
 The light along my way.

So long my song of sorrow
 Hath sounded in mine ear;
 So long the blest to-morrow
 I sought did not appear,
 That in my lonely musings
 In gloom and shade obscured,
 I came to feel the anguish
 Must be for aye endured.

But through the rifted curtain
 Came love's benignant beam,
 And my sad song of sorrow
 Evanished, like a dream,
 O welcome, welcome radiance!
 Effulgent light divine!
 Into my heart forever
 In all thy brightness shine.

UNSATISFIED.

THE last libation from my cup of dole
At my worn feet is poured:
Upon the altar lies my weary soul,
With all its secrets stored!
O would there was some kind and friendly hand,
In patient ways to guide,
To help me bear the tortures of the brand,
By which my soul is tried.

The glittering summit, that in youth I viewed,
So peerless, bright and fair,
That high before my longing vision stood,
All crowned with jewels rare,
Still seems as far beyond my utmost reach,
As when my life began;
Still unattainable as angel speech,
Or heaven's prismatic span.

'Tis ever thus, O weary heart, I cried,
A something curbs our powers;
Whate'er we do, we're still unsatisfied;
An aching void is ours.
This toilsome, careworn life is all too brief,
For hopes to be fulfilled;
The cup that overflows with bitter grief
Is from lost hopes distilled.

THE DYING DAY.

THIS summer day is dying! Pulseless seems
Great nature's throbbing heart. The hour
So still, that in the golden sunset's gleams,
Enchantment broods o'er field and flower!

A somber pall is falling on the slope
Of yonder hillside! and all around
That tells to human hearts of love and hope,
Is hushed in silence most profound.

The trees have ceased to wave their leafy arms;
Unheard are all their low refrains;
The whispering zephyrs, with their cooling charms,
Repose as blushing daylight wanes.

The tranquil river dreams in peaceful sleep,
Its fancies, portents of the night;
For in its depths, the fleecy cloudlets creep,
And star-gems drop their tears of light.

Unto my spirit comes a holy calm,
Like unseen odors round me shed;
As if a hand divine hath laid its palm,
In benedictions on my head.

Fainter yet the lessening light appears,
As night moves on its gloomy way!
The mourning skies dissolve in dewy tears,
And darkness shrouds the lifeless day.

And so methinks, our own brief day may end,
When darkness shades our mortal eye;
So may, in love, the weeping heavens bend
In peaceful watchings where we lie.

TO MY VIOLIN.

A HOST of pleasant memories come thronging
thick and fast,
As half a century of years roll upward from the
past;
A chain of bright companionships, enwrought with
goodly cheer,
That bind thee closer to my heart to make thee
doubly dear.

Upon the cheerless solitude of ocean's trackless
waste,
The drear monotony of life thy music oft effaced;
When to thy thrilling measures, with lightsome
step and free,
Forgotten was the dull routine in hours of merry
glee.

Thy well-worn strings recall once more the old
familiar airs
So dear to every genial soul whose inner chamber
wears
The festive garbs their strains inspired, mementoes
of old days,
The strains that from thy bosom leaped to cheer
life's dreamy maze.

Melodious voices oft with thee rehearsed the dear
old songs,
That never can forgotten be while life to earth
belongs;

They lie embalmed within my heart, rich treasures
of the past,
A heritage of earthly joys, that age can not outlast.

Those grand old tunes so fondly loved, around thee
linger yet;
The music of thy sounding strings is to their move-
ments set;
Though age doth bring to other things the omens
of decay,
Thy voice is just as mellow now as in the olden
day.

When time with me shall be no more, and I lay
thee aside,
Some master hand may wake the chords that in
thy bosom hide;
Then purer, sweeter grow thy tones as age creeps
on apace,
And all the old-time melodies will wear a brighter
face.

Thou source of youthful pleasures gone—com-
panion of my prime!
Thou pastime of maturer years—inspirer of my
rhyme!
To that dear boy who bears my name, with all the
love I owe,
I leave the dear old instrument, when I lay down
its bow.

THE MAGIC FURROW.

Among some Slavonic tribes, it is believed that the cholera can never cross a line made with a plow, drawn by virgin hands at midnight.

WHAT means yon strange procession that I see,
Devoutly wending, silently and slow,
Its weary way across the open lea,
As if o'erburdened by a sense of woe?

Six spotless maidens clad in raiments white!
They seem like angels, who, in hours of need,
Are sent to sinful earth, from realms of light,
Commissioned to perform some righteous deed.

Three mourning widows walk with reverent tread,
In sable garbs of woe, the foremost place!
One bears aloft, with meek and bowed head,
The image of the Blesséd Virgin's face.

The midnight dews are falling thick and fast!
The zephyrs slumber in their mistress' arms;
The starry sentinels, their lances cast,
As if to guard the maidens fair from harm.

But hark! a tremor in the quiet air
Breaks on mine ears, and to my sense appears
The sound of gentle music sweet and fair,
Like vanished echoes from the distant spheres!

I list again, and now the weird refrains
 Burst from those widowed hearts with subtle
 power;
The cadence of the holy Ave strains
 Pervades the solemn stillness of the hour.

But, stranger still! a more mysterious sight
 Appears before my wondering eyes, for now
I see, behind the group of maidens white,
 Drawn by their soft and tender hands, a plow.

That in the mellow earth a furrow turns!
 A single furrow, even, true and fair;
As peasants, in the spring for harvests yearn,
 Prepare the fallow ground with hopeful care.

But why, I ask, do these frail maidens now
 Thus labor so unwomanly at night?
Why mark the lonely heath with rustic plow
 While chanting strains of some mysterious rite?

Are they inspired to do, in Heaven's name,
 Some sacred mission, armed with holy zeal?
Or is it duty's voice they hear proclaim
 To acts of penance for their spirits' weal?

A wail o'er all the stricken land is heard,
 That Asia's scourge is spreading far and near;
Within the city's walls each heart is stirred,
 And loved ones live in trembling and in fear.

And so its dreadful ravages to stay,
 These faithful maidens in the Virgin's name,
Devote their strength in this unseemly way;
 Love's holy service and reward to claim.

For they, in very truth believe, that by
A simple line a common plow hath made
By virgins drawn, beneath a midnight sky;
The awful scourge will not their homes invade.

Thus, like a city walled about, secure
From fierce assaults by hostile bands outside,
This charmful circle proves a barrier sure
O'er which the deadly plague can never ride.

TO A LADY FRIEND'S PICTURE.

THE mirror of a trusting soul,
In that dear face I see;
Revealing, as with light divine,
A wealth of constancy.

I read the messages of love,
Those speaking eyes impart,
And fain their words of tenderness,
Would treasure in my heart.

I see beneath that lurking smile,
Though veiled in modest guise,
The cheer of friendship's steadfast light,
Warmed by affection's ties.

If those mute lips could only speak,
Though but one uttered word,
My waiting heart, by that sweet voice,
Would to its depths be stirred!

But O! to press those lips to mine,
And feel the warm breath near,
Not touch of angel forms divine,
Would be to me more dear.

THE FESTIVE CLAM.

READ AT A CLAM-BAKE, JULY, 1886.

LET others expend all their reason and sense
 On subjects more grand and sublime;
 And scale at a bound the Olympian fence,
 On wings of etherial rhyme.
 Be mine the glad task with a steadier flight,
 Divested of pretense or sham,
 Bivalvular measures I fain would recite
 In sounding the praise of the clam.

Go, search the dim records of ages long past;
 Go, dine in the caves with the bears;
 The lacustrine dwellings so ancient and vast
 Go, study with diligent care.
 There see the great mastodon roaming the
 woods;—
 The young deers along with their dams;
 But never a trace, where the lake cities stood,
 That the dwellers e'er feasted on clams.

We've read of great feasts in fable and song,
 Of the richest ambrosial food;
 And goblets of nectar made foamy and strong,
 As none but goddesses could!
 We fancy that even the gods will say
 However they surfeit and cram,
 That we poor mortals fare better than they,
 While feeding on luscious baked clams.

We've heard of ascetics—fanatical cranks,
Who've tortured both body and soul,
By fastings and scourgings and similar pranks
To gain a millennial goal!
Endurance of hunger they always insist,
Will make them submissive as lambs,
But the only temptation they can not resist,
Is a dish of smoking hot clams.

New England may boast of its Puritan stock,
And the virtues of that little band,
Who planted the tree upon old Plymouth Rock,
Whose branches o'ershadow the land.
But what with its fashionable blue-stockings pride,
Its many conventional shams,
It could never have reached fame's high-water
tide,
Had it not been for its clams!

THE OLD LOVE.

"There is no love like the old love."—DR. O. W. HOLMES.

A CROSS the trestled bridge of years;
 Its span of memory brings
 From out of the vistas of our youth
 Some long remembered things;
 Some writings on the tablet there
 That ne'er can be effaced;
 As legible the lines appear
 As when they first were traced.

Nor age, nor feeble pulse alone,
 Nor weak and trembling limbs;
 Nor sightless eyes, nor soundless ears,
 The early record dims.
 'Tis only when the heart shall cease
 Its warm life-giving streams,
 That youthful fancies will have fled,
 With all their love-wrought dreams.

And so the tenderest and best
 Of what the heart can know!
 The sacred flame divine of love
 The first to live and glow,
 Forever will remain unquenched,
 While life and memory last!
 Old age will warm its wrinkled hands
 With embers of the past.

Then marvel not nor needless blame,
If one sweet face appears,
Among the group of early friends,
Than others, far more dear;
Whose picture still remains undimmed;
Whose love we cherish yet;
Whose presence in our waking thoughts,
We never can forget.

Though years, with ever changing moods,
Their varying shades have wrought,
And time hath forged the gentle bands,
That other friendships brought;
Yet in life's afternoon, we feel
The hidden embers glow,
The same its morning did reveal
So many years ago.

UPON RECIEVING A BOX OF ROSES
FROM A LADY FRIEND.

I KNEW by the fragrance that greeted my sense,
That some one had breathed on the flower;
And, lips whose sweet luster was void of pretence,
Had pressed that bright gem of an hour!
My cheeks were aflame as I drew forth the prize,
And saw the bright petals uncloze;
Then I knew, my dear friend, without a disguise,
The breath was a kiss on the rose!

All day, as I looked at the beautiful gift,
And the lovely aroma inhaled,
A light seemed to shine through an opening rift
Of a cloud that my happiness veiled,
'Twas the light, my dear friend, of love shining
through,
And its rays to my soul gave repose,
For I felt a sweet presence of one whom I know,
Was more precious to me for the rose.

TO A YOUNG WIDOW, ON BEING
ASKED BY HER TO WRITE
A POEM.

MY dear Mrs. B. 'tis apparent to me,
That you have an eye on the poet!
But why, I confess, I never could guess,
You take this new method to show it!

Now, dear Mrs. B. between you and me
The poet feels greatly elated;
And for you would desire to touch the sweet lyre,
In strains that could never be mated.

But with simplest of rhyme and measures of time
And homely in rythm and diction,
You must be content, and meekly consent
To suffer the dreadful infliction.

The poet must fail and ever bewail
His power t' indite a love sonnet;
As odorless 'twould be as the flowers we see
Displayed on a bran new spring bonnet.

Then again, Mrs. B. 'tis obvious to me,
That a poem to yourself indited,
Should be truly as sweet, attractive and neat,
As she, who the rhyming invited.

And thus you may know, why it comes to be so;
The poet must fail in his ditty;
He can not portray your charming array,
In lines either sober or witty.

Accept from the bard his kindest regard,
While friendships remain unbated;
May lots of good cheer, greet you year after year,
And you be no longer unmated.







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